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# American Girl®

Jul/Aug 2018
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July/August 2018

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# Contents

Follow Your Inner Star™
*Volume 26, Number 4*

Page 14

Page 40

Page 30

2 **The Buzz**

3 **Girls Express**

8 **Little Songs of Summer**

10 **Ice Cream**

12 **According to Aggie**

14 **Movie Magic**

22 **You'll Never Believe Where I Am!**

26 **Real Rescues**

30 **Paper Maker**

32 **When the Fourth of July Is Plain Old July Fourth**

40 **This or That**

41 **Who's That Girl?**

43 **Posters**

45 **Help!**

48 **Behind the Scenes**

**Plus**
Summer adventure posters!

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likes building sand castles at the beach
loves butter pecan ice cream
loves playing in the ocean waves
thinks ladybugs are cute

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## SUPER SUMMER!

There are so many things to love about summer: the long, sunny days, the extra time with friends and family, and lots and lots of ice cream! This issue is packed with ideas for fun summer days—and nights. Learn how to throw an outdoor movie party on page 14. Take a "dream vacation" quiz on page 22. And learn to make beautiful marbled paper on page 30. Write to me and tell me what you think of this issue and what you did this summer!

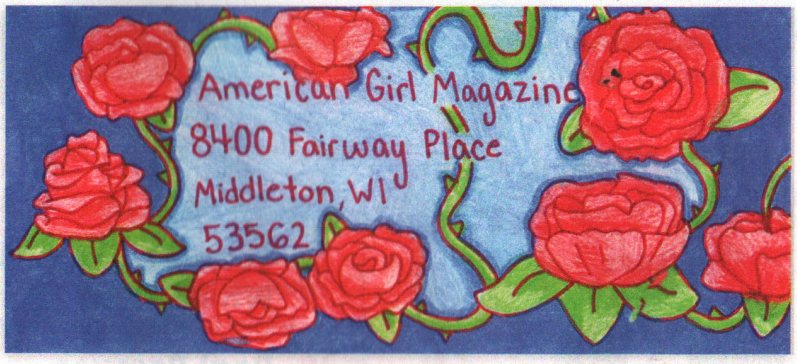
Barbara
**EXECUTIVE EDITOR**

# Write to Us!

**BE SURE TO INCLUDE**
- First and last name
- Address and phone number
- Birth date, including year
- School photo or other portrait
- Parent's signature

**SNAIL MAIL**
Send us a cool envelope! Print our address neatly on the front and your return address and the section of the magazine you're writing to on the back.

**OR CONNECT WITH US ONLINE**
PLAY.AMERICANGIRL.COM/PLAY/MAGAZINE




we can't print every letter, but we read everything you send to us. Hope to hear from you soon!

ENVELOPE ART BY
Annabelle N.
**Age 12, California**

**Safety first!**
Some of our projects and activities require an adult's help. When you see this symbol, be sure to ask an adult to work with you.

Girls EXPRESS
FOR & BY GIRLS!

# TASSEL Time

**Jazz up your bedroom wall, favorite bag, or bookmarks with yarn tassels!**

String tassels on a long piece of yarn to create a garland.

Add a tiny tassel to your purse zipper.

Slip a ribbon through the end of a tassel loop to create a bookmark.

**Turn the page for step-by-step tassel-making instructions.**

# AG POLL

Answer these questions to see how your answers compare to those of other AG readers.

### What kind of books are your favorite?

- **50%** Full of adventure
- **20%** Sweet with a happy ending
- **18%** Hilarious
- **12%** A little scary!

### Which animal would you like to be for a day?

- **44%** Dolphin
- **29%** Cat
- **19%** Bird
- **8%** Monkey

### Which word describes your friends best?

- **31%** Kind
- **30%** Goofy
- **21%** Trustworthy
- **18%** Hilarious

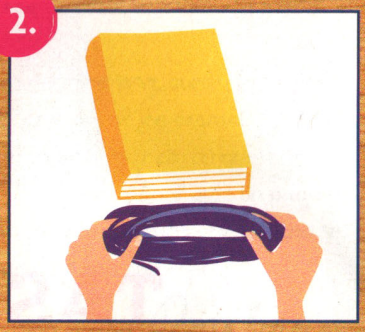
# Tassel How-To!

Follow these steps to create your own tassels.

**1.**

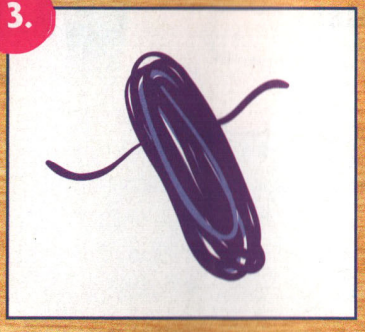
Wrap yarn around a book 20–30 times (depending on how thick you'd like the tassel to be) and cut the end. Want to make a longer tassel? Wrap the yarn around the book the long way.

**2.**



Use both hands to carefully slip the yarn off the book.

**3.**



Lay the yarn bundle on top of a 6-inch piece of yarn. Position it so the 6-inch piece is near the top of the bundle, and tie it to make the top loop of the tassel.

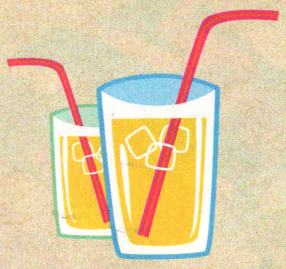
**4.**

Cut the bottom loops to finish the tassel. Then give your tassel a haircut! Trim the ends depending on how long or short you'd like the tassel to be.

**5.**

Want to make a tiny tassel? Wrap the yarn around your hand instead of a book!

# SHINING Star



When Amiah V. learned about families who couldn't afford to pay their kids' school lunch bills, she felt sad. She also wondered whether any of her own classmates struggled with the same problem.

After some research, she and her parents discovered that some of her schoolmates' families owed about $40 in unpaid lunches. The six-year-old wanted to help. Amiah and her little sister, Aria, held a lemonade stand and raised the money in about an hour.

But Amiah wasn't finished—she and her parents kept fund-raising online, and they held more lemonade stands. After a few months, they had raised $23,000 to pay school lunch debts throughout Amiah's school district.

And now she's got a bigger goal: to pay the bill for the whole state of Idaho, which means raising about $100,000. Amiah hopes to inspire other kids (and adults!) to help others. "No matter how old you are," she says, "you can make a difference."

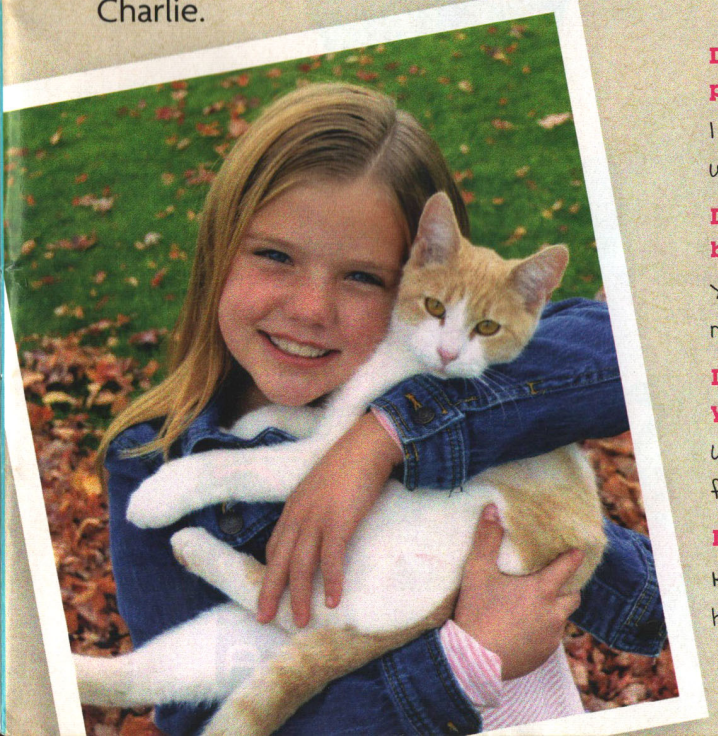
Illustrations: Tracey Wood

**You can Shine, too!**

Hold your own lemonade stand to raise money for a cause that means a lot to you.

# Meet a Reader's Pet

Abbie loves her cuddly cat, Charlie.



**Describe the day you got your pet.**

I was cuddling him so much when we got him!

**Do you celebrate your pet's birthday?**

Yes. We bake him a cake made of cat food.

**Describe a time your pet made you laugh.**

When he did a side/front/back flip.

**Does your pet know any tricks?**

He knows to come when I call his name.

**How would you describe your pet in three words?**

Soft, snugglebug, talented.

**How do you show your pet you love him?**

When he meows, I pet him!

Abbie S.
**Age 11, Idaho**

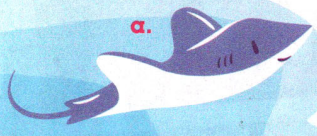
To find out how your pet can be featured, go to americangirl.com/playmagazine

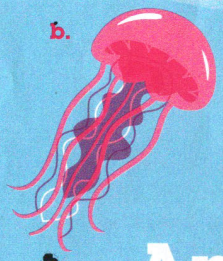
# MINI Quiz

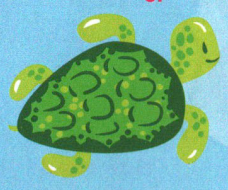
What's in your beach bag?

**1.** You won tickets to a VIP event. What's it for?
- a. A meet and greet with the best swimmer in the country
- b. The opening of a new spa
- c. A behind-the-scenes tour of a new museum

**2.** Which ocean creature do you like best?

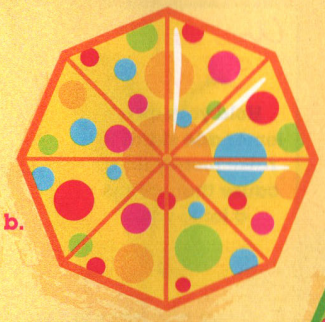

a.


b.


c.

**3.** Which beach umbrella would you choose?

a.


b.

c.

**4.** At an amusement park, you're usually found . . .
- a. on the biggest roller coaster.
- b. lounging in the lazy river.
- c. taste-testing all the fun food!

**5.** When you arrive at a campground, the first thing you do is . . .
- a. look for the lake. You're ready to canoe!
- b. claim the perfect campfire spot. Ready for s'mores!
- c. set up the tent. The sooner you do that, the sooner you can start exploring!

# Answers

## Mostly a's
WATER BUG

You're a thrill seeker and are happiest in the water.

## Mostly b's
BEACH LOVER

Sunshine, warm sand, and relaxation are your favorite things.

## Mostly c's
SUN EXPLORER

Your curiosity often leads to little adventures, and you love learning new things.

# True Story

## Sophia loves learning about bugs and insects!

Dear American Girl,

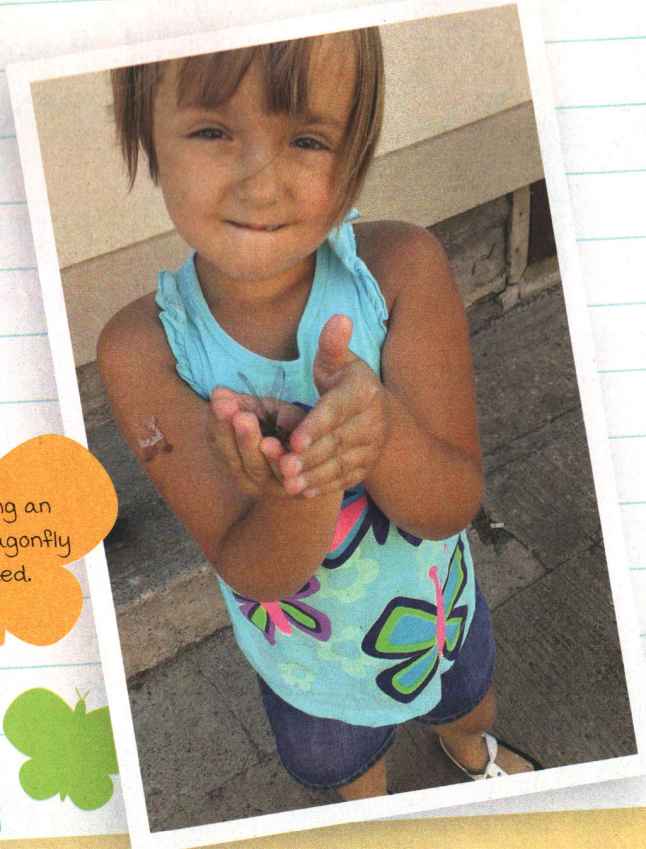
Did you know that there are millions of different types of bugs and insects in the world? To me they are just so fascinating. There are more than 11,000 types of grasshoppers alone! My favorite kind is the pink grasshopper. They are so tiny and cute. Last year, I cared for an injured grasshopper. I named it Hopper.

I used to get teased because I love bugs. Once at school I found a grasshopper and put it on my shoulder. An older kid threw the grasshopper on the ground and stepped on it. Bugs are my best friends, and I don't like to see them stomped on. I went home upset.

My mom wrote to some scientists who study bugs and asked for advice about how to encourage me to keep learning about them. One scientist asked me to help with a scientific paper! He asked me questions and listed me as coauthor. It was a really, really good experience.

Now kids don't tease me much. Instead they ask me to teach them about bugs. I tell them things, like how happy bugs make me. And that most bugs don't bite. And that they make great friends.

Sophia S.
**Age 9, Canada**

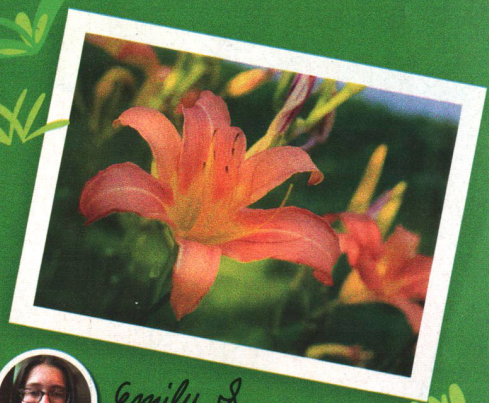


I'm holding an injured dragonfly I rescued.

# AG ART GALLERY

Our readers love taking pictures of bright flowers.

Jazmin D.
**Age 11, Oregon**



Emily S.
**Age 13, Ohio**

## HELP US FILL OUR GALLERY!

**Send color copies of original artwork or photos to the address on page 2. Sorry, we can't return entries.**

Contest

# LITTLE SONGS OF SUMMER

Did you know there are many kinds of poems—such as odes, sonnets, elegies, and ballads—whose names literally mean "song"? Our talented readers created some wonderful "Song of Summer" poems of their own!

## SUMMER SWEETNESS

MY FRIENDS AND I
CAN JUMP IN THE POOL,
AND WE CAN EAT ICE CREAM,
SO WE CAN STAY COOL.

Imani J.
Age 9, Georgia

## A NEW SEASON

THOUGH THE NEW YEAR'S SO FUN,
AND SOCCER GAMES HAVE BEEN WON,
I'M SO GLAD IT'S SUMMER!
TIME FOR BEACH DAYS IN THE SUN.

Avery G.
Age 9, California

## ON THE PIER

SUMMERTIME IS HERE.
I'LL SIT ON THE PIER.
AND WE'LL WATCH THE SUNSET
WHILE THE DOLPHINS ARE NEAR!

Madelyn H.
Age 9, Ohio

## SUMMER'S SO HOT

ALTHOUGH SUMMER'S SO HOT,
AND WINTER IS NOT,
SINCE THERE IS NO SCHOOL NOW
I DON'T MIND IT A LOT!

Sophia T.
Age 12, Alabama

### MAKE A SPLASH

SUMMER IS FUN
BEING OUT IN THE SUN.
LET'S GO TO THE POOL NOW—
YOU SKIP AND I'LL RUN!

Elizabeth S.
Age 10, Virginia

### SUMMER DANCE

I HOPE YOU LIKE SUMMER—
IF NOT THAT'S A BUMMER!
BECAUSE IT'S SUCH FUN
TO DANCE IN THE SUN!

Daniela R.
Age 11, Puerto Rico

### RELAX, IT'S SUMMER!

BIG, BRIGHT KITES IN THE SKY
AS YOU CALMLY JOG BY.
YOU CAN LIE ON THE BEACH,
TAKE A DEEP BREATH, AND SIGH.

Maggie B.
Age 10, Florida

### SEASON'S SIPS

SADLY, WINTER MUST GO.
NO MORE SIPPING COCOA!
BUT IN THE COOL SUMMER SHADE,
WE CAN DRINK LEMONADE!

Natalia G.
Age 12, California

## New Contest:
## CREATIVE COVERS

Everyone has a story, so fill our shelf with yours! Design an original book cover for a book about YOU! Will your book be an adventure, a comedy, a mystery, or a drama? Will it involve travel, or friends, or something else that's super special to you? Maybe it's set in the present or past—or maybe it's a book about the future and all you hope to do! Be sure to give it a catchy title, and draw a cover that really stands out. We can't wait to see what you create!

Send us your original book cover, using the address on page 2, and remember to include your first and last name, address, birth date, and photo (a school picture or portrait-style photo is best). **Postmark deadline: August 10, 2018. Winning designs will be featured in the January/February 2019 issue. Sorry—we can't return entries.** ★

Illustrations: Galia Bernstein

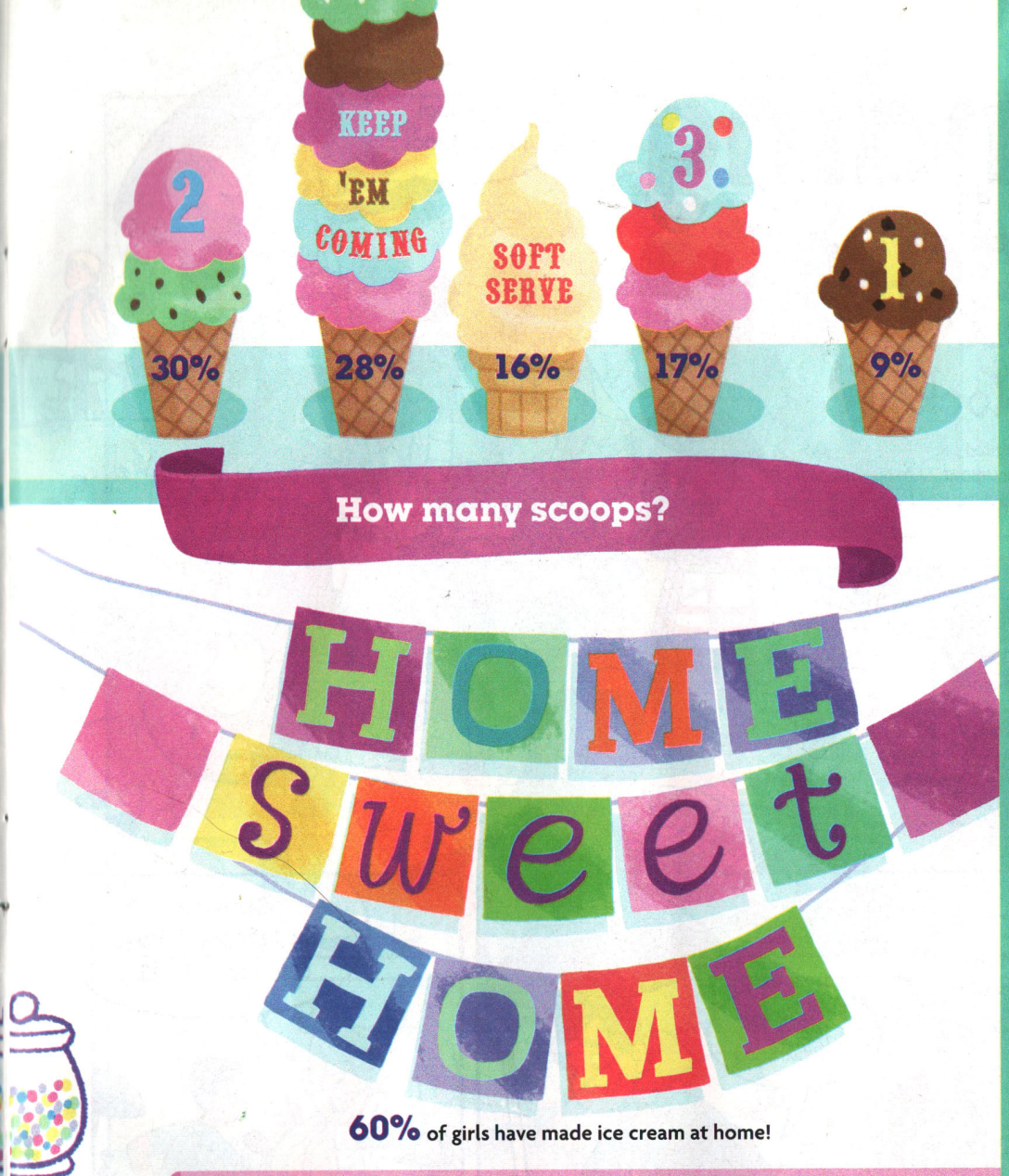
# Ice Cream

What's the scoop on your frosty, creamy, sweet, and wonderful favorites? Here's what some of our readers had to say.

**Here are the creamy frozen treats our readers like best.**

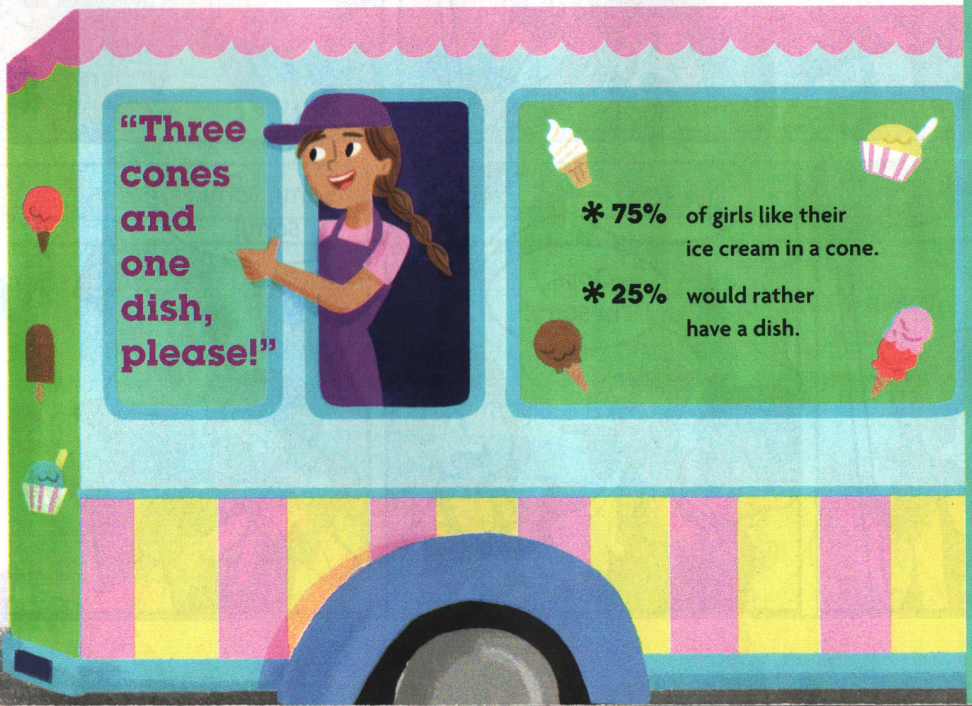
**EVERY SEASON is the best season for ice cream, according to 55% of our readers! For seasonal favorites, girls love ice cream best in . . .**

* 35% summer
* 4% fall
* 4% spring
* 2% winter




HOME Sweet HOME

**60%** of girls have made ice cream at home!




Illustrations: Paige Pooler

# Coming Up: YIKES

## Embarrassing Moments

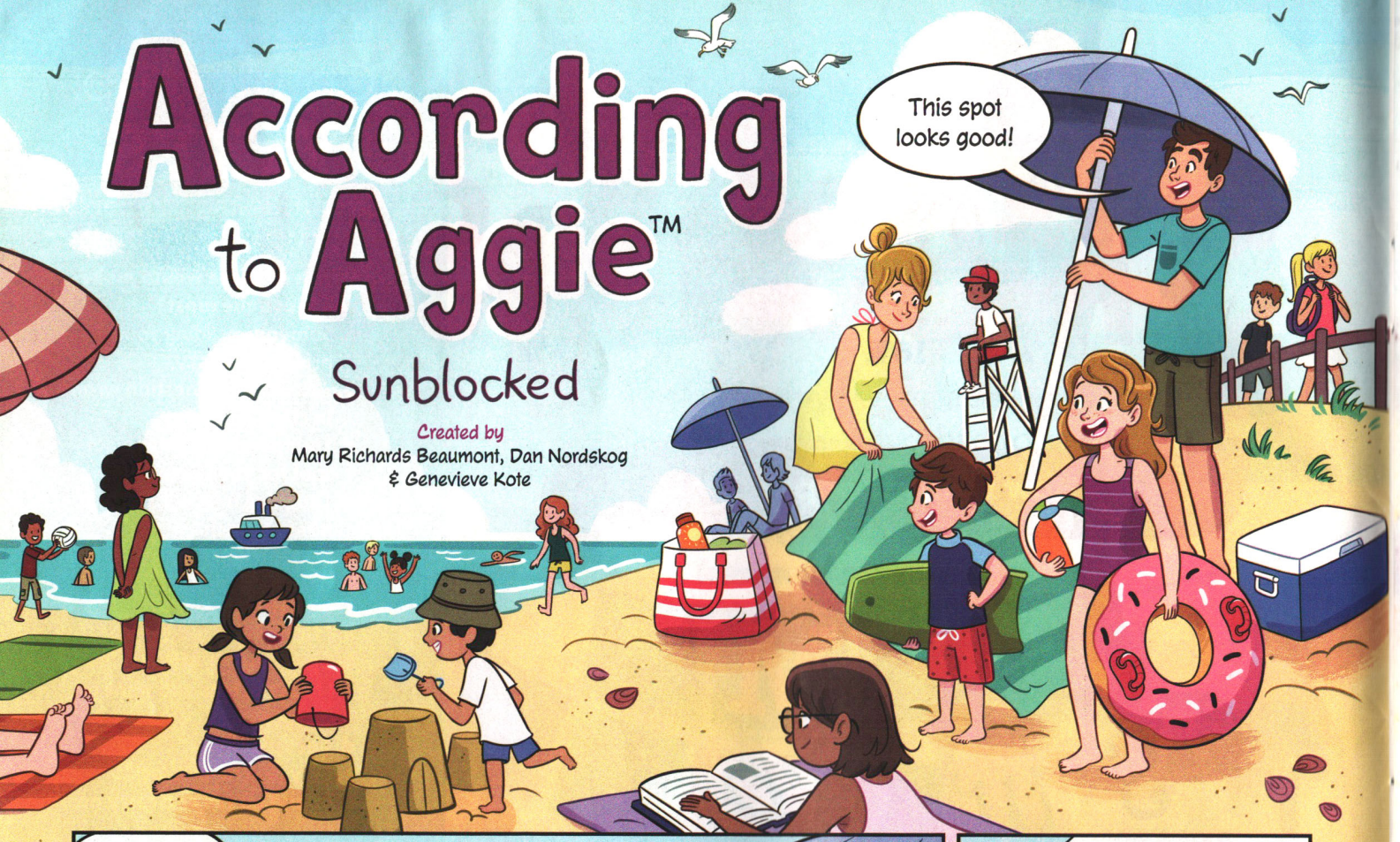
1. **Which of these would make you blush the most?**
   - **a.** Someone reading your private journal.
   - **b.** Answering a question wrong in class.
   - **c.** Your parents trying to act cool for your friends.
   - **d.** Laughing milk out of your nose at lunch.
2. **How do you react when you're embarrassed?**
   - **a.** I turn bright red.
   - **b.** I just laugh it off!
   - **c.** I hide my face and want to disappear.
   - **d.** I get mad.
   - **e.** I cry (a little or a lot).
   - **f.** I stand up tall and carry on.
3. **If you saw someone else who was embarrassed, what would you do?**
4. **After something embarrassing happens, you . . .**
   want to talk it out **OR**
   want to be alone for a while.
5. **What makes you feel better after you've been embarrassed?**
6. **Does it help to hear other people's embarrassing stories?**
   Yes **OR** No
7. **Tell us about your most embarrassing moment (if you'd like).**

Send your answers to the address on page 2, along with your first and last name, address, photo, and birth date. Postmark deadline: August 10, 2018. Some answers will appear in the January/February 2019 issue. ★

# According to Aggie™

## Sunblocked

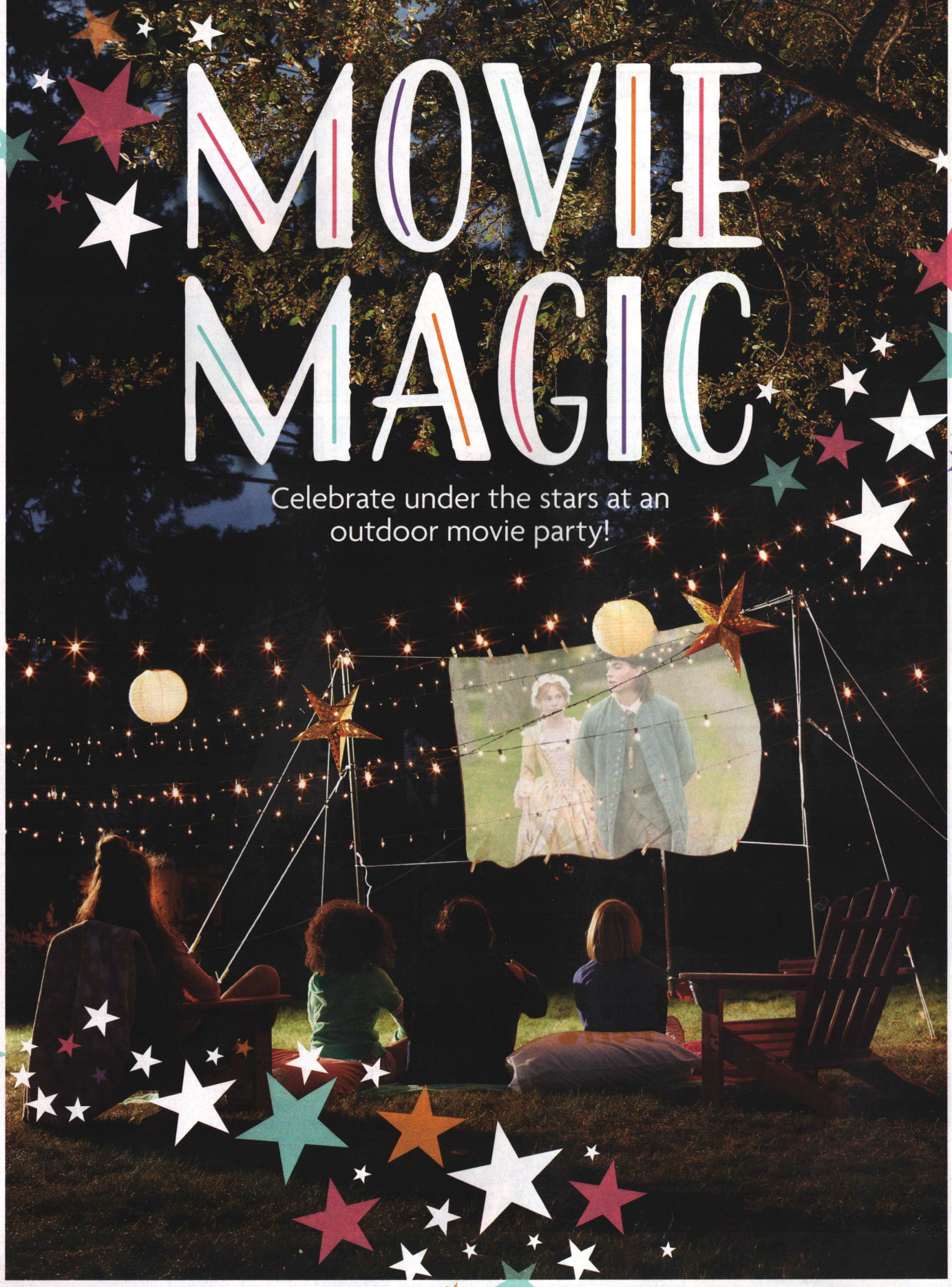
Created by
Mary Richards Beaumont, Dan Nordskog
& Genevieve Kote



Look out!
Wha—? EW!
We gotta get OUT of here!
Nate, watch out!
Oh oh...
We're almost ready.
Don't miss my next misadventure:
LOCKER SHOCKER

# MOVIE MAGIC

Celebrate under the stars at an outdoor movie party!



## INVITATION

Send a shooting star! Use a stencil to draw a large star on a piece of gold glitter card stock. Cut out the star and write the party details on the plain side of the paper. Use a hole punch to make five holes along one side of the star. Fold a 10-inch piece of ribbon in half and tie it to one of the holes. Repeat with four more pieces of ribbon and the other four holes.

## MOVIE MARQUEE

Create a movie marquee using black poster board. Use colored duct tape to create a border around the poster board. Use chalk markers or gel pens to write the movie title, showtime, and any other info you want your guests to know. Place the sign near the party's entrance.

Styling: Deb Ahren, Andrea Debbink, Stef Endres, Jolene Schulz

## VIP SEATS

Set up blankets or chairs so guests have comfy places to sit. (Be sure to place taller seats in the back so everyone can see.) You can also ask guests to bring sleeping bags or blankets to sit on.

## TREAT TRAYS

Here's a way for guests to tote their treats. Decorate the sides of cardboard box lids or boxes using glitter tape. Give a lid to each guest so she'll have a tray to hold her snacks during the movie.

## ACT IT OUT

Before the show starts, play a game of movie charades. Have each guest write three movie titles on three separate pieces of paper. Place all the pieces of paper in a bowl. Then take turns choosing a movie title to act out for the group. Keep playing until all the movie titles have been used.

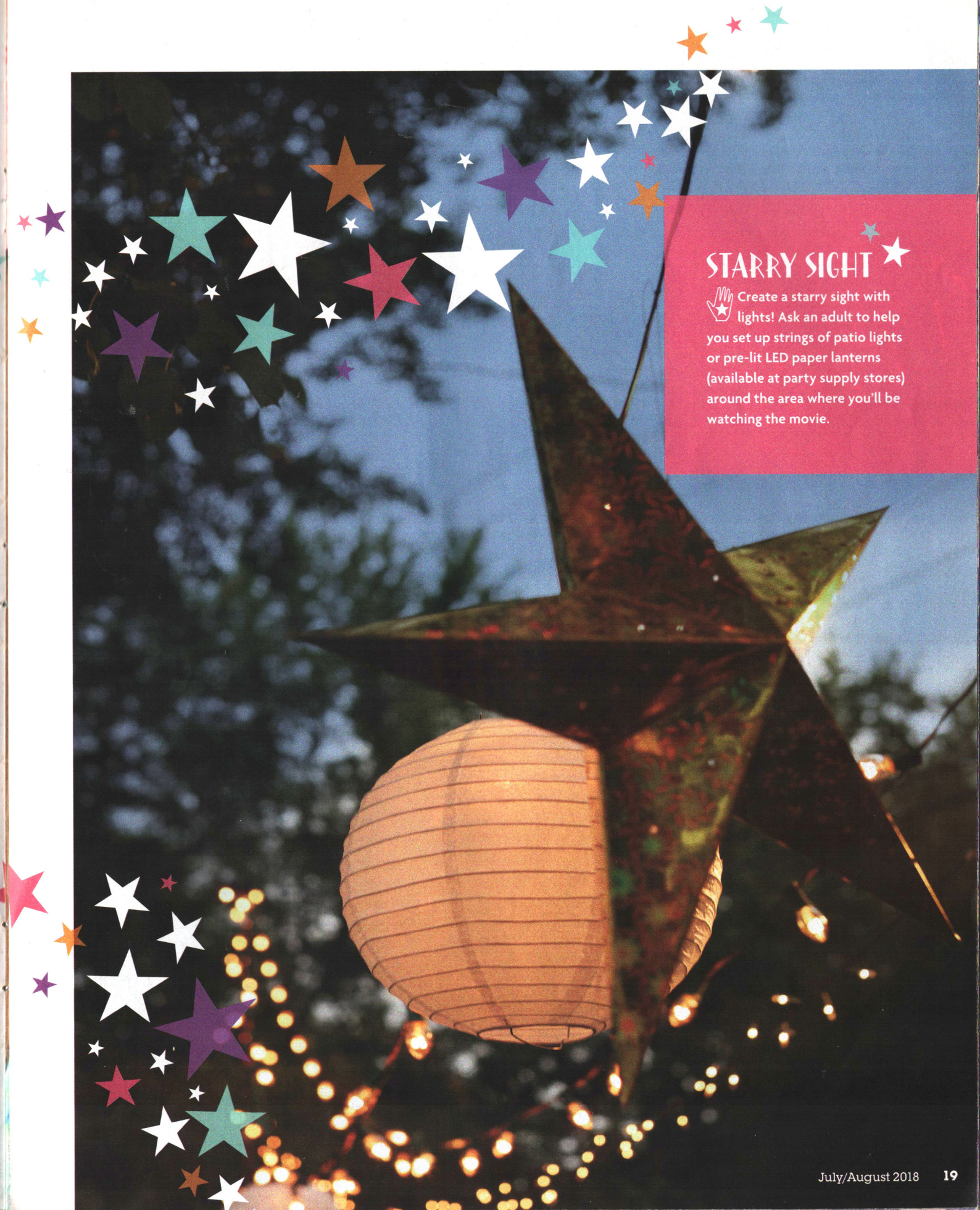
# CONCESSIONS

Don't forget the food! Set up a concessions table at the back of your movie-watching area. (That way people can get snack and drink refills without interrupting the show.) Serve typical movie treats like popcorn and candy or a meal such as pizza or nachos. Try one (or all!) of the ideas shown here.

**LEMONADE:** Make a sparkly drink by mixing equal parts pink lemonade and sparkling water. Serve over ice in cups with lids and straws.

**NACHO BAR:** Serve tortilla chips and let your guests choose their toppings. Include toppings such as beans, shredded chicken, corn, salsa, cheese, and guacamole.

**DESSERT SALSA:** Mix 1 tablespoon lemon juice, 1 tablespoon honey, and ½ teaspoon vanilla extract in a bowl. Stir in 2 cups sliced strawberries. Chill for one hour. Serve with cinnamon chips.



## STARRY SIGHT

Create a starry sight with lights! Ask an adult to help you set up strings of patio lights or pre-lit LED paper lanterns (available at party supply stores) around the area where you'll be watching the movie.

## SCREEN TIME

To show a movie on a large screen, you'll need a projector that works with a laptop or smartphone. Libraries and schools sometimes have this equipment available to rent. Ask an adult to help find the equipment and assist with setup. For a screen, a white vinyl tablecloth with fabric backing works best. Ask an adult to hang the tablecloth on a badminton or volleyball net and hold it in place with clothespins.

## SUMMER GLOW

Let guests select glow-in-the-dark accessories. Set out glow sticks, bracelets, and other glow-in-the-dark items near the entrance to your party. Let guests wear the accessories during the party and take them home afterward.

## TWINKLING TRAIL

Create a lighted path to the movie-watching area. Set up two parallel lines of clear plastic cups to create the path. Then place a battery-operated LED tea light in each cup. Don't forget to turn them on when the sun goes down! ★

Quiz

# YOU'LL NEVER BELIEVE WHERE I AM!

Answer the quiz questions and collect clues to map out a vacation beyond your wildest dreams.

**1.** Which sneakers would be your go-to pair?

a. Rainbow sneakers
b. Comet high-tops
c. Cheetah-print sneakers
d. Fish-scale tennies

**2.** If you could have one special power, which would you choose?

a. The ability to fly
b. Invisibility
c. The ability to breathe underwater
d. The ability to talk to animals

**3.** Which book would be on your must-read list?

a. *It's a Jungle Out There!*
b. *Swimming Class at the School of Fish*
c. *To the Moon and Back Again: The Life of a Real Astronaut*
d. *The ABCs of Abracadabra*

**4.** You're hosting a costume party at your house, and even your dog wants to participate. Which outfit would you pick for your pup?

a. An alien costume
b. A frog costume
c. A unicorn costume
d. A crab costume

**5.** What is your favorite thing to do when you go camping?

a. Swim in the lake
b. Sleep under a starry sky
c. Hike in the woods
d. Tell ghost stories around a campfire

**6.** Which presentation would you most likely give at school?

a. Our Solar System
b. Sunlight and Our Ocean
c. If We Could Time-Travel . . .
d. Exploring the Layers of the Rain Forest

**7.** Which animal T-shirt would you most likely wear?

a. Otter space
b. Hoodini
c. Seally girl
d. Chimpion

If you picked mostly orange . . .
OUTER SPACE
If you picked mostly pink . . .
MAGIC CASTLE
If you picked mostly blue . . .
UNDER THE SEA
If you picked mostly green . . .
RAIN FOREST

Illustrations: Karly Jade Catto Text: Carrie Anton

## OUT OF THIS WORLD

You'll never believe where I am: **Outer Space!** Gravity couldn't keep me down, so I hopped a rocket and headed for the moon and stars. It's a cosmic wonderland up here, and I'm having so much fun exploring the galaxy with a space helmet on my head and a jet pack strapped to my back. I'm off to float among the Milky Way now and, if I can, catch a ride on a comet. Keep an eye to the sky; that shooting star you see just might be me!

765 SPACE S
WASHINGTO

OVER the MOON
for
OUTER SPACE

## DEEP-SEA DIVING

You'll never believe where I am: **Under the Sea!** The ocean was calling, so I decided to dive right in. To my great surprise, once underwater, I could breathe! No snorkel, diving mask, or even gills were needed—just me breathing beneath the sea as if it were full of air. I stayed submerged, swimming to see every school of fish I could find, paddling by pearl-filled oysters, and wading in the waters of humpback whales. I even made friends with a mermaid who treated me to an underwater tour of coral reefs!

5113 OCEAN
OLU U, H

EVERYONE NEEDS
A PORPOISE

## A WALK ON THE WILD SIDE

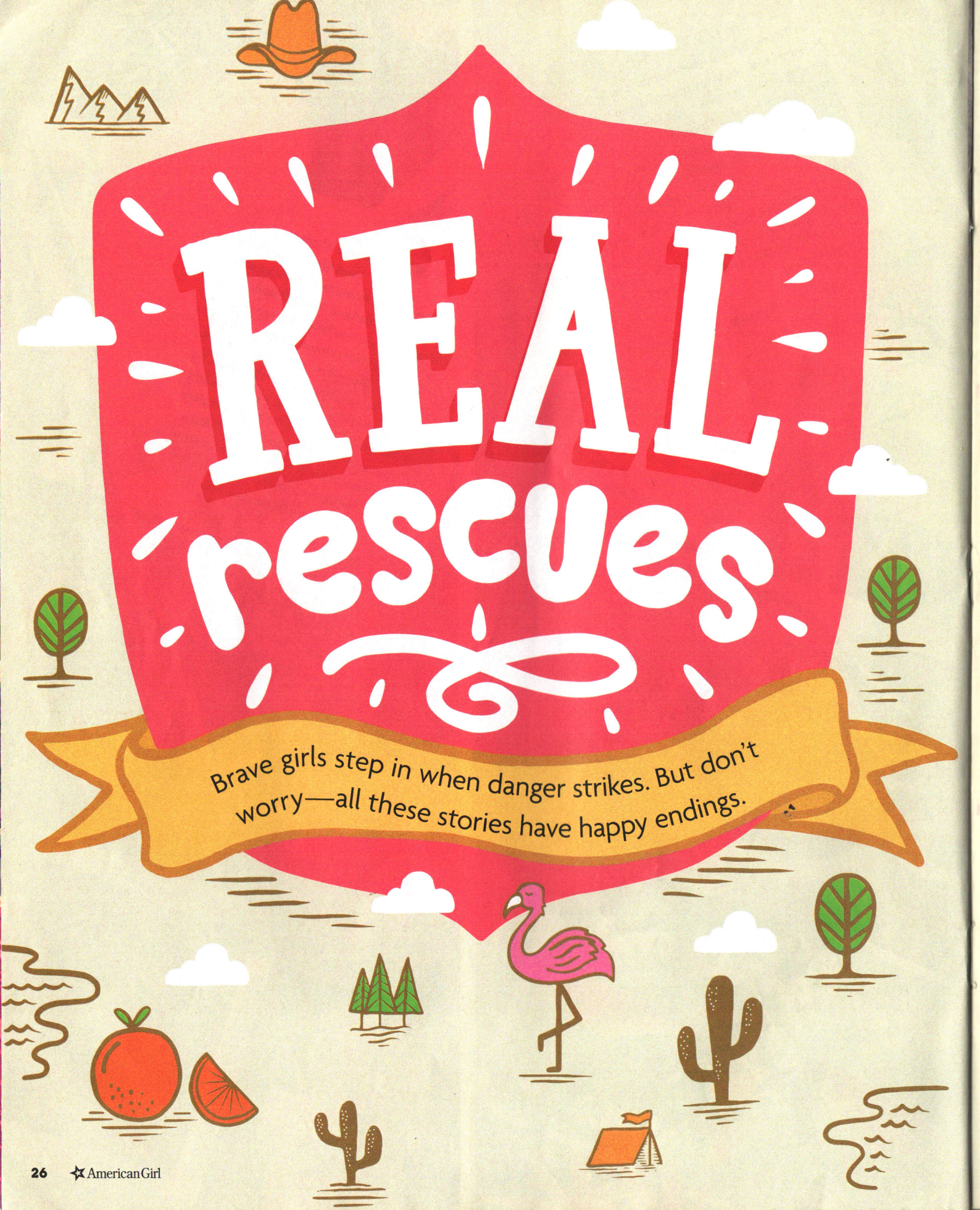
You'll never believe where I am: in the **Rain Forest!** I climbed the tree in my backyard, and it kept growing the higher I went. Just when I thought I was nearing the top, a long, dangling vine appeared, so I took a swing and landed right in the middle of the jungle. As far as I can see in every direction are trees and leaves and plants in so many shades of magnificent green. At night I rest inside an amazing tree house so high it nearly touches the sky. And just beside my hammock, a sleepy sloth rests its eyes. In the morning, I'll zip-line through the trees to take a ride on an elephant!

2234
ISABE
PUERT

## HOCUS POCUS

You'll never believe where I am: in a **Magic Castle!** I was lifted into what felt like a tornado and landed with a plop on the castle lawn. Wizards walk by with wands, and flying unicorns leave a trail of glittery clouds. One wizard girl my age showed me to my room, which is at the very tippy top of the castle. I thought I'd be climbing stairs forever, but instead she told me to repeat after her, and I floated right up as if I were a balloon. A black crow delivered a wand just for me, and tied to it was a note inviting me to a fantastic feast. ★

932 CAS LE CT.
EDINBRGH,
SCOTLAND EH2


REAL
rescues
Brave girls step in when danger strikes. But don't worry—all these stories have happy endings.

# An Alligator Bit Me!

**Juliana O.**
**Age 11, Florida**

Illustrations: Matthew Taylor Wilson

Last May I went to the lake with my family. I thought it would be a normal fun day of swimming, but I was wrong.

My brothers, cousins, and step-uncle were with me in a marked-off shallow swimming area with a net and a lifeguard. The rest of my family ate lunch on a nearby bench. I felt very safe.

I was sitting in the shallow water with my feet facing the deeper end, when something hit my leg. I knew it was an alligator as soon as it bit me. Its teeth were so sharp! I remember screaming in my head. I didn't know how this could be happening—it happened so fast and it was a sneak attack. Soon I started yelling out loud for help, but my family didn't know what was wrong. I started to punch the nine-foot-long alligator, and then I remembered something I learned at an alligator education park: The nose is the most sensitive part of an alligator! I stuck my fingers up its nose, and it let go of me.

I tried to crawl out of the water, but I couldn't get up because my leg was hurt. My step-uncle grabbed me and carried me out of the water. It was the lifeguard's first day of work, and he was shaking while he bandaged my leg. We were all shaking! I was rushed to the hospital and got fourteen stitches in my left leg.

I have a big scar that makes me sad when I look at it sometimes, because I think about how scared I was that day. But I also remember how brave I was in that moment. I reacted so fast—I had to! It's not like the alligator was going to give me two minutes to think like in a chess match. I had to be a quick thinker. Sometimes you're in a situation where nobody else can help you and you have to think fast and help yourself. That's what I did.

# I Saved My Mom's Life!

**Kailey G.**
**Age 9, Idaho**

Have you ever had to do the opposite of what your mom says? I have. One day I came home sick from school. My mom was making me soup in the kitchen and then she started to act really weird. When she talked to me, her words were slurred and her face looked droopy. Plus, she wasn't acting like herself.

At first, I thought she was just joking with me, but after a while I knew something was very wrong. I said, "I think I should call 911." But my mom said, "What do you mean? I'm fine! Why would you do that?" This confused me because my mom is a nurse and I figured she would know what to do. But I still felt certain that something was not right. I decided I had to do something. I grabbed the phone and called my dad. As soon as my dad heard her speak, he called 911 right away. It turns out my mom was having a stroke! A stroke is when the blood supply in your brain is cut off, and it's very dangerous. The ambulance came to our house and took my mom to the hospital. She's doing great now.

My mom never stops talking about how I saved her life. She's so proud and tells me all the time. She says she's so happy I was there because she didn't even realize she was having a stroke. Her brain was confused. I'm really happy I knew something was wrong.

A little while ago, the 911 operator, the paramedics, and my mom's doctor came to my school and gave me an award called the "Lifesaving Award." I'm proud of myself for staying calm and calling for help. But most of all I feel so happy that my mom is OK.

**These girls are true heroes! If you ever find yourself in a similar situation, look to an adult first to help.**

# I Rescued A Little Boy From Drowning

**Sofia P.**
**Age 8, Texas**

This past fall I was at a neighborhood pool party on a breezy, warm day. I live in Texas so it's warm—even in October. My friend and I went outside to look for a pair of goggles and saw someone at the bottom of the pool. We thought it was one of our friends playing, but we quickly realized that it was a little toddler who didn't know how to swim. I knew something was wrong right away.

We looked around, but the adults were far away in the backyard and there was no time to spare. I jumped in, dove underwater, and grabbed the toddler. I swam as hard as I could and pulled the little boy up onto a low step in the pool. As soon as I got him out of the water my friend and I started screaming for help. Once the adults heard us, they ran over. The little boy wasn't breathing, which was really scary. The adults did CPR, and someone called 911.

The little boy made a full recovery and is doing great now. I was so scared that I wouldn't be able to get him out of the water quick enough, but I did. I've been taking swimming lessons since I was three years old, and I'm thankful that I'm a strong swimmer.

My parents are so proud of me and say, "Wow. You saved that little boy." People tell me I'm a hero, but what else could I have done? He needed help, and I knew what to do. ★

# Paper Maker

Create pretty marbled paper with this do-it-yourself dye!

Be sure to cover your clothing and wear gloves to protect your skin from food coloring.

## YOU WILL NEED

- ☐ Disposable tablecloth
- ☐ Foam shaving cream
- ☐ 9-by-13 cake pan
- ☐ Food coloring
- ☐ Rubber spatula
- ☐ White card stock
- ☐ Ruler

## Directions

1. Cover your work surface with a disposable tablecloth. Spray a layer of shaving cream into the bottom of the cake pan. It should be about 2 inches deep.
2. Starting with one color, drip food coloring into the shaving cream. (Try a couple of drops in about six different places.) Use a rubber spatula (also called a rubber scraper) to swirl the color into the shaving cream. Don't overmix.
3. Place a piece of card stock flat on top of the shaving cream so the entire surface of the card is touching the shaving cream. Let it sit for 10 seconds, then lift the card off the shaving cream.
4. Place the card on the tablecloth with the shaving-cream side up. Starting at one end, use the ruler to scrape the shaving cream off the paper. Use a paper towel to dab any shaving cream left behind. Let the card dry. Repeat steps 1–4 with more pieces of card stock.
5. Once the cards are dry, they might be wavy. You can flatten the cards by placing them under something heavy such as a stack of books for a day or two.

Here are some ways to use the marbled paper:
• Stationery
• Bookmark
• Garland
• Photo mat
You can use the same shaving cream to make many sheets of paper. If the colors get too mixed, make a new batch. ★

Photos: Chris Hynes Photography Styling: Andrea Debbink

Fiction

# WHEN THE FOURTH OF JULY IS PLAIN OLD JULY FOURTH

How can Callie celebrate her favorite holiday when she's thousands of miles from home?

*by Carolyn Mackler*

I love everything about the Fourth of July. I love that our country has a birthday party, and to celebrate, Green Glen goes all out in red, white, and blue. Green Glen is the town where I live in Vermont. I live here with my mom, my dad, my little sister Martha, and our dog Indie, whose full name is Independence Day because he was found on a roadside on my favorite day ever. Indie has dots on his nose that look like stars and he has stripes on his tail. Also, how cool is it that my name is Callie and the only U.S. president to be born on July fourth was Calvin Coolidge? To make it even cooler, Calvin Coolidge was from Vermont, just like me!

The truth is, my dad lives in Vermont, but he's hardly ever here because he travels all the time for work. Some weeks he's in California, some weeks he's in England, and some weeks he's in Dallas and Philadelphia and New York City. Martha keeps track of where he is on a map, but I've long since given up. I don't like it, but when you have a parent who works in global sales, that means they'll spend more time traveling the globe than staying home with their family.

That's another reason I love the Fourth of July. Every summer, no matter what, my dad makes sure to be in Vermont that day. In the morning, he gives Martha and me each a bottle of orange soda, which we're not allowed to have on any other day. Sipping our sodas, we put Indie on a leash and we all walk to the Fourth of July parade on Main Street. We always meet up with my friend Sarah and her family. We wave at the antique cars and the decorated floats and the shiny fire trucks. Indie barks at the goats that clomp along in the parade, their necks decked out in stars-and-stripes ribbons. Sarah, Martha, and I scramble wildly for the candy that people throw from the floats. After the parade, my mom cooks hamburgers on the grill and my dad helps me make my annual Fourth of July dessert. It's red strawberries and white shortcake, and I add a few drops of food coloring to the whipped cream to make it blue. At night, we drive to the high school stadium and watch fireworks until way past our bedtime.

And it's all taking place in a week and a half! Today is June twenty-fourth so I can already taste the orange soda and see the fireworks exploding in the night sky. Not only that, but something big is happening this Fourth of July. I don't know what yet, but my mom said my dad is coming home from his latest work trip soon and he has news about July. Martha thinks it's not about the holiday but that we're getting a pool this summer. I think it's about the Fourth of July. I think the news is that we're going to be riding on a float and we'll be the ones throwing candy to the kids. Martha and I keep asking my mom who's right, but she just shakes her head and smiles.

I totally think I'm right.

I've already decided I'm not getting lollipops to throw because they always crack when they hit the ground. I have no idea what throwing candy from moving vehicles has to do with our country gaining independence from England, but if I get the chance I'm totally throwing something soft like bubble gum or taffy.

Illustrations: Marta Kissi

"We're going to England for the month of July," my dad says that evening. He's sitting on the couch next to my mom and they're both grinning. "It's good we already have our passports because we're leaving on Saturday. We'll drive to Boston and fly from there."

"What!" Martha says like she's excited.

"What?" I say like I'm not as excited.

OK, I'm excited about England, but when I count on my fingers I realize that Saturday is June thirtieth, which means we'll be away from Green Glen on the Fourth of July. That means we'll miss the parade and our cookout. And since the United States won the Revolutionary War against England, I doubt they'll be shooting off fireworks on the other side of the Atlantic that day.

THAT MEANS WE'LL MISS THE PARADE AND OUR COOKOUT.

My dad explains how his company wants him to work in their London office in July. Since my dad's work feels bad about him being apart from his family for so long, they're paying for us to fly over with him, and they're even renting us an apartment for the month.

"Did you know that in England they call it a flat?" my dad asks.

"A flat!" Martha squeals. She says it so loudly that Indie looks up from where he's sleeping, lumbers over, and nuzzles his spotted nose into my hand.

"What else do they say in England?" Martha asks.

"Did you know they call sneakers trainers?" my mom asks. "And cookies are biscuits?"

"Cool!" Martha says.

As the three of them talk about British words and how we'll go to Big Ben and ride a Ferris wheel called the London Eye, I quietly pet Indie.

"What about the Fourth of July?" I finally ask.

My mom shakes her head. "We'll miss it this year, Callie."

The dog turns a few circles and flops on the rug.

"What about Indie?" my sister asks.

"Indie is going to Sarah's house," my mom says.

"Sarah knows?" I ask. I can't believe my parents would tell my friend before they tell me! I saw her at the park two hours ago and we were scheming about how we're going to collect the maximum amount of candy during the parade.

"Not yet," my dad says. "But her parents do. They agreed to take Indie for the month. We asked them to wait to tell Sarah until you knew."

"So Indie will go to the July Fourth parade," I say sadly, "and we won't."

"I hope you girls are excited about this trip," my mom says. "I think it's a wonderful opportunity."

"I am," Martha says. "I can't wait to put on my trainers and walk all around London."

I shrug. I am excited to live in another country and see Big Ben and eat biscuits. I just wish we could go on July fifth. When I suggest that to my parents, they shake their heads and tell us that the plane tickets have been bought and it's a done deal.

Ten days later and one continent away, I wake up on the morning of July fourth. Martha and I share a bedroom in our flat. Our room looks out to a grass court where British people play tennis in white outfits. Martha and I love watching them volley their tennis balls back and forth and we've even made up nicknames for the regular players.

My parents were definitely right that this is an amazing experience. We've seen Big Ben and Buckingham Palace and the Science Museum, and we've eaten chips, which is the British word for French fries, and we've been to a high tea where they serve platters of tiny sandwiches and miniature cakes. Every morning my dad goes to work, but instead of being gone for weeks, he comes home every night and we all have dinner together.

But even though I'm having a great time, as I lie in bed this morning I'm missing the Fourth of July in Green Glen with my bottle of orange soda and the parade and the cookout in our backyard and the fireworks at night. All of a sudden, I get an idea. I quickly change into shorts and a T-shirt and run into the kitchen.

"I know what we have to do!" I say to my mom. She's cutting up a melon at the counter. My sister is writing in her travel journal at the table.

"Good morning, Callie," my mom says. "Want cereal?"

"Sure," I say.

"What do we have to do?" Martha asks.

"Do you realize what today is?" I ask them both.

"I know," my mom says, sighing. "Martha was just telling me that she misses the Fourth of July in Green Glen."

"That's the thing," I say, shaking some cereal into a bowl and dousing it with milk. "We can have both. We can be here in London and also have a Green Glen Fourth of July."

Martha draws a bunch of stars around the edges of her paper. My mom slides melon cubes onto plates for the three of us and joins my sister and me at the table. My dad usually leaves for work before I wake up so he can walk to the office. He says that the London Underground, which is their subway, gets too crowded to ride during the morning commute.

"We'll start by video-calling Sarah at nine," I explain. "Her parents can hold up their screen and we'll watch the parade and we can even say hi to Indie over the phone. I bet he would sit and shake if he heard our voices." I point to my mom and then add, "As the floats go by, you can throw candy at Martha and me."

"Yeah!" Martha giggles. "Do you still have the gum and peppermint candy from the plane?"

"I do," my mom says. "But—"

"Hang on," I say. "There's more. After breakfast, we can buy ingredients and make strawberry shortcake. Red, white, and blue like we always do. Then I was thinking we'll find a place to barbecue, like maybe in a park since we don't have a grill here? Dad can meet us and we'll eat hamburgers. And for fireworks . . . I don't know . . . ."

"We could watch videos of fireworks!" Martha shrieks.

"Yes!" I say. "We can celebrate our country's birthday and still be here in England. We just won't run around bragging about how we won the American Revolution."

"Girls," my mom says, setting down her fork. "I like the idea and we can definitely try some of it, but it's eight-thirty here."

"That's a half hour until the parade," I say. "Plenty of time."

"Callie," my mom says, "remember that Vermont is five hours behind England? That means it's still the middle of the night there. The parade won't happen for hours, and we're definitely not skipping a day in London to wait for it."

"Oh," I say glumly.

"Can we still have candy?" Martha asks. "You don't have to throw it at us."

My mom reaches for her phone. "I bet Sarah's parents will take pictures of the parade. Let me text

them and ask if they can send us a few."

"That's OK," I say, shaking my head. I can't help feeling disappointed. For as long as I can remember I've seen the Green Glen Fourth of July parade. I just can't believe I'm not going to see any bit of it this year.

"We can still do orange soda!" Martha exclaims, opening the refrigerator door. "We have orange juice. Mom, can we mix it with your seltzer? And sugar? The soda that Dad gives us is really sweet."

"Yes to the seltzer," my mom says. "No to the sugar. But I'll get you girls ice pop s for dessert."

"Lollies," Martha says, grinning. That's what they call ice pops over here. We both love that word.

"Or we can make strawberry shortcake," I say, my mood improving as I think about my red, white, and blue dessert. "We can definitely still do the Fourth of July even though over here it's plain old July fourth."

"Yeah!" Martha says as she splashes orange juice into two glasses and I add seltzer.

"We'll try," my mom says, but she doesn't look convinced.

My mom was right. We're trying to make today into the Fourth of July but we're not succeeding. So far it's plain old July fourth. We've trekked to four different grocery stores. We don't have a car here, so we walk everywhere. We've gotten strawberries and shortcake mix. It took us forever to explain to the grocery store people that we were trying to make shortcake, which we told them was a sweet biscuit but not a cookie-biscuit. More of a scone-biscuit. I think they thought we were crazy. And then, after buying whipped cream, we couldn't find blue food coloring and Martha was tired of walking in her flimsy sandals so my mom said we'll have to have regular white whipped cream even though a red and white dessert is definitely not the way to celebrate our country's birthday. Also my mom did some research and found out that the only parks where you can barbecue are too far away so we'll have to cook our burgers in the frying pan at the apartment.

"The flat," Martha says, limping. "And my feet really hurt."

"You should have worn your sneakers," I say grumpily.

"Trainers," Martha says.

"Whatever," I say.

"Be nice, Callie," my mom says, shifting her grocery bags to her other arm and taking my sister's hand.

I shrug. It's hard to be nice when I'm missing my favorite holiday. If Calvin Coolidge were alive today, he'd be disappointed that I'm not in Vermont celebrating our country the way it's supposed to be done.

**IT'S HARD TO BE NICE WHEN I'M MISSING MY FAVORITE HOLIDAY.**

After lunch, my mom fills up water bottles and rubs sunblock on our cheeks and brings us to the park. She read in the guidebook that there's a playground in nearby Holland Park called Adventure Playground, and it's supposed to be amazing.

Martha and I both have on our sneakers, no *trainers,* so we skip ahead. When we get to the park, kids are running everywhere. They're climbing a huge rope web and swinging on swings and, best of all, there's a real zip line.

"They'd never have this in a playground in America!" Martha shouts.

I have to admit, she's right. I've never seen a zip line at a playground back home. And the funny thing is, kids are lining up politely to take turns. Back in the United States, you have to scramble to get onto anything good at the playground.

"Dad says this is called a queue and that people in England are really into them," I tell my sister. She's still obsessed with learning British words. Also I feel bad I was grumpy to her before, so this is my way of apologizing.

Martha smiles at me, then leans in and whispers, "Do you hear all the kids' accents? So cool!"

A few minutes later, Martha and I are waiting in the line—no, I mean the queue—when a few girls behind us ask where we're from. I tell them we're from Vermont, in the United States.

"We love your accents," they say to my sister and me. "You sound like people on TV."

"We don't have accents," Martha says, giggling. "You have accents!"

"No, you have accents!" they shriek and we all laugh together.

As we wait for the zip line, they tell us how they're still in school here in England and they're at this playground with their class today and we're so lucky to be on holiday.

"We're not having a holiday," I say, trying to figure out why they're mentioning the Fourth of July when they don't celebrate that holiday here.

"On holiday," Martha explains to me, "is their word for vacation. Summer vacation."

"Your go!" the girl says when my sister gets to the front.

"That means it's your turn," I say proudly because I heard some kids saying that before.

"I have an idea," one of the girls says to us. "We'll trade today. You call it 'a go' and we'll call it 'a turn.'"

Martha and I nod our heads enthusiastically, and then my sister jumps on the zip line to take her go.

When we leave the playground, my mom navigates us to an area called Kyoto Garden. As Martha and I marvel at the shimmery silver and orange koi in the pond and the little waterfalls dribbling over the rocks, my mom explains that this is a famous Japanese garden. There are even peacocks walking around! It's not fireworks, but I have to admit between the peacocks and the fish, we're seeing some amazing colors today.

As Martha is tossing a few British coins into a fountain and my mom is flipping through her guidebook, I walk over to a small grassy area and read a sign. It says that this part of the garden is called the Fukushima Memorial Garden and it was a gift from Japan commemorating how the British people helped the Japanese after a terrible earthquake and tsunami. I look around at the grass and the stones and I think about how I've been feeling so bad about not celebrating my country's birthday, but there are other countries to celebrate, too. Like I can celebrate England for helping Japan when its people were in trouble. And I can celebrate Japan for making this garden!

On the walk home, my dad calls and asks my mom what time to come home for dinner. She says we'll eat around six and we're having burgers and strawberry shortcake. When she tells him the whipped cream dilemma, I touch her arm and whisper, "It's OK. I don't need blue whipped cream."

Because it is OK.

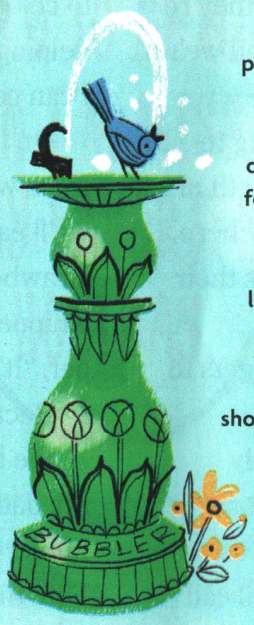
We have had a wonderful day in London and my dad is coming home for dinner tonight. Back home, he would have flown to Vermont for the Fourth of July but he would have left a day or two later for somewhere on the globe and we would have barely seen him for the rest of July. But being in London has allowed us to have dinner with my dad at night and we don't always have to say good-bye to him. Our family gets to stay together. And that is the best celebration of all. ★

Turn to page 48 to read how author Carolyn Mackler's travels to London with her family inspired this story. And take a peek into illustrator Marta Kissi's studio to see how she created the art for this story.

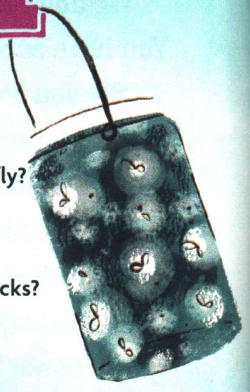
# THIS or THAT

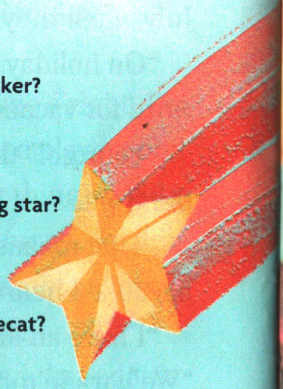
What do you call it?

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| sprinkles | OR | jimmies? |
| mountain pie | OR | pudgy pie? |
| PJs | OR | jammies? |
| flip-flops | OR | thongs? |
| crayfish | OR | crawdad? |
| cornhole | OR | beanbag toss? |
| teeter-totter | OR | seesaw? |




| | | |
|---|---|---|
| lightning bug | OR | firefly? |
| pancakes | OR | flapjacks? |
| drinking fountain | OR | bubbler? |
| lollipop | OR | sucker? |
| shooting star | OR | falling star? |
| skunk | OR | polecat? |
| goose bumps | OR | chicken skin? |





Illustrations: Marilena Perilli

# WHO'S THAT GIRL?

NASA
Fort Collins #1 SOFTBALL
I HAVE THREE SISTERS. OUR PARENTS TOLD US THERE WERE NO LIMITS TO WHAT WE COULD ACCOMPLISH.
I WAS BORN APRIL 9, 1976, IN INDIANAPOLIS, INDIANA. I GREW UP IN FORT COLLINS, COLORADO.
I LOVED SCIENCE—ESPECIALLY MY CHEMISTRY SETS!
CHEMISTRY
CHEMISTRY
MY FATHER WAS FROM CUBA AND MY MOTHER WAS FROM VIRGINIA. I GREW UP EATING DELICIOUS CUBAN FOOD—MY FAVORITES WERE *FRIJOLES NEGROS*, *PLATANOS*, AND *ROPA VIEJA*.
YOUNG ASTRONAUTS CLUB
I SPENT A LOT OF TIME PLAYING SPORTS!
IN FIFTH GRADE, I JOINED MY SCHOOL'S YOUNG ASTRONAUTS CLUB.
IN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL, I WATCHED A SPACE SHUTTLE LAUNCH FOR THE FIRST TIME, AND IT WAS AMAZING! THAT'S WHEN I STARTED TO DREAM OF BECOMING AN ASTRONAUT.
THE SPACE SHUTTLE

TURN THE PAGE TO DISCOVER WHO I AM!

Text: Andrea Debbink. Illustrations: Julia Bereciartu

## SHE'S...

# DR. SERENA AUÑÓN-CHANCELLOR

## ASTRONAUT & MEDICAL DOCTOR

For Serena Auñón, joining the Young Astronauts Club was more than an after-school hobby; it was the very beginning of her journey to space! When Serena was growing up in the 1980s, NASA launched space shuttles many times a year. One day as she watched a shuttle launch on TV, Serena's father said: "You want to work for NASA? You need to be an engineer." (Engineering is the study of complex machines, systems, or structures.) Serena's father was an engineer himself. And he was right: half of all astronauts have studied engineering. From then on, Serena planned to be an engineer.

When she turned sixteen, Serena's parents gave her an amazing gift—a weeklong trip to Space Camp in Huntsville, Alabama. Her experiences at Space Camp—using science, math, and technology to do simulated (or pretend) missions—showed Serena that her childhood dream was possible. In college, Serena earned a degree in electrical engineering. Afterward, she attended medical school and studied aerospace medicine.

In 2006, Serena was hired as a flight surgeon at NASA, helping astronauts and cosmonauts in the United States and Russia. She loved helping people through medicine, but she still wanted to be an astronaut, too. The odds were against her. Every year thousands of people apply to the astronaut training program and only ten to fifteen people are selected. In 2009, Serena got the phone call she'd been hoping for since she was a kid: She was chosen to be an astronaut!

Since becoming an astronaut, Serena has had some incredible adventures: learning wilderness survival skills, searching for meteors in Antarctica, and navigating a submarine in the deep ocean as an aquanaut. But the greatest adventure is yet to come. This summer, Dr. Serena Auñón-Chancellor will head to space for the first time! While in space, she'll live aboard the International Space Station and conduct science experiments in orbit. Think of her the next time you look to the stars!

"BE BRAVE AND BOTHER PEOPLE. WHAT I MEAN BY THAT IS TO NEVER BE AFRAID TO ASK WHAT SOMEONE DOES FOR THEIR CAREER IF YOU ARE CURIOUS. FIND OUT WHAT THEIR RESEARCH IS LIKE, ASK THEM QUESTIONS, AND ASK THEM TO TEACH YOU."

-DR. SERENA AUÑÓN-CHANCELLOR

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# My parents took my phone away!

**Dear American Girl,**

My parents took my phone away because I went to a website without asking permission first. They said I had to earn their trust back. How can I do that?

hopeless

No phone may be no fun, but your parents are trying to keep you safe—it's their job. To gain back their trust, start with a sincere apology. Let them know why you're sorry and what you have learned from the experience. Work with your parents to create guidelines for screen time, including how much time you can spend on your phone and which websites are off-limits. The more open you are with your parents about your online life, the more likely they'll be to see you as a good digital citizen who can handle the freedom—*and responsibility*—a phone brings.

**Dear American Girl,**

I have a friend who is really negative. She always finds the bad in everything. How can I help her change her attitude?

so negative

Someone who can't look on the bright side can cast a dark shadow on a friendship. Your friend might naturally be negative, but she could also be dealing with tough times. Lend a caring ear in case she's dealing with something she hasn't shared. No matter the reason, remember you don't have to join the pity party. Keep the conversations light by sharing jokes and funny stories. If the mood turns gloomy, help your friend find the silver lining in the clouds. If things stay glum, talk to her about it. She might not even know she's doing it. Be patient while she works on lightening her mood, because it can be a hard habit to break.

Illustrations: Laura Cornell

**Dear American Girl,**

I'm the oldest child in my family, and my parents want me to babysit my three younger siblings. How do I make sure they behave so my mom doesn't get mad?

*big sis*

Mom and Dad are lucky to have such a good helper like you to rely on, but that doesn't mean the task of entertaining your siblings will be easy. Before you're put in charge, talk with your parents to learn what they expect of you and share any worries you have. As parents, they've learned tricks to keep little ones busy without them crying, fighting, or getting bored. When you know you'll be babysitting, have activities planned that the four of you can do together. Crafts, games, acting out books, or playing dress-up can keep your siblings too busy to misbehave. Remember, don't think of it as a chore, but as happy playtime with your brothers and sisters.

**Dear American Girl,**

I recently learned that I am going to get braces. I'm afraid that kids at my school will tease me, and I'm worried about it.

*brace face*

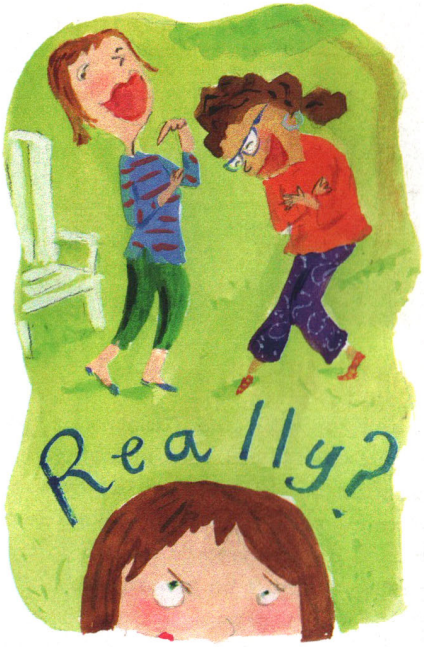
Kids may call you "Brace Face" or "Tin Grin," but don't take it to heart. If others see they can't bug you with names, they'll back off. Since lots of kids your age have braces or will get them, most won't even give your new smile a second thought. Crack a few braces-related jokes to let others know it's no big deal for you. Grin big and show off those silver accessories knowing that when your braces come off, your smile will really shine!

**Dear American Girl,**

People in my class are spreading rumors about a boy in my class. I'm worried that if the rumors get out, he will be sad. I do my best to stop people from doing this, but no one is listening to me!

*Help!*

Rumors can come out of nowhere, and usually for no good reason. While some rumors are meant to bully, others create drama, which for some, can make a dull day more interesting. When rumors spread, classmates saying "Psst . . ." probably aren't thinking about the boy's feelings. If you're around when the rumor is hot topic, shut it down by saying, "This is just a rumor. I don't buy it!" or "This is spreading gossip, so leave me out." If standing up for him sounds scary, band together with your friends to make the rumor vanish. If things feel too tough to handle, find a trusted adult to help. And if the rumor gets back to the boy, let him know you're his friend.




**Dear American Girl,**

I love my mom, but sometimes she tells other people embarrassing things about me! I've asked her to stop, and she says she's sorry, but then she does it again!

*info*

This happens to me a lot, too. When my mom starts to talk about something embarrassing, I say, "I'd rather not talk about that." It works with my mom, and I hope it works with yours!

-Vivi

It's hard to have a mom who embarrasses you. But you should tell her how you feel about it.

-Sabine

Tell your mom some things you're proud of, things that you don't mind her talking about with others. This gives her something to share that isn't embarrassing to you.

-Susie

Find a time and place that's private so that you can let your mom know how much this bothers you. You can work it out together because your mom loves you and cares about your feelings.

-Bray

Come up with a code word, such as "banana." When your mom says something that embarrasses you, you can say, "Banana!" and she'll know to stop.

-Lydia

A lot of parents (including mine) think some embarrassing stories are "cute" or "silly." I just try to laugh it off because I know my mom isn't trying to be mean on purpose.

-Reina

## Help Other Girls!

I have trouble waking up each morning. My mom will wake me up, and I'll tell her I'm awake, but then I fall asleep again. How can I stay awake in the morning?

Way too sleepy

Do you have advice to help solve this problem? Or do you need advice for solving your own problem? Send letters to:

Help!
**American Girl magazine**
8400 Fairway Place
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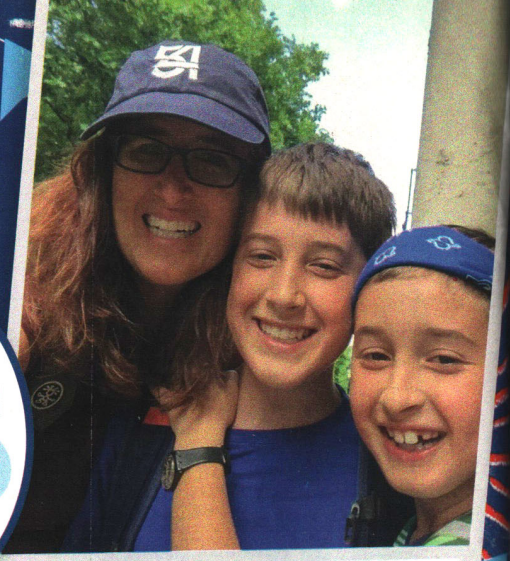
We can't respond to all letters. But we read everything you send!

# BEHIND THE SCENES

The creators of our fiction story share their love of London!



## MARTA, ILLUSTRATOR:

I work from home in London, in a tiny studio space.

London is such an inspirational place! What I love the most are all the different types of people who live here. People-watching is a great source of inspiration for me!

My favorite things about London: I love its beautiful architecture, especially all the magical-looking streets and many hidden corners.

I also love London's many cute bookshops. My favorite books are kids' books, and I still collect them as an adult!

As a child growing up in Warsaw, Poland, I always enjoyed drawing, and my dream was to become an artist. For a while I wanted to be a painter but decided to focus on illustration as a career when I moved to London to study at the university.

## CAROLYN, AUTHOR:

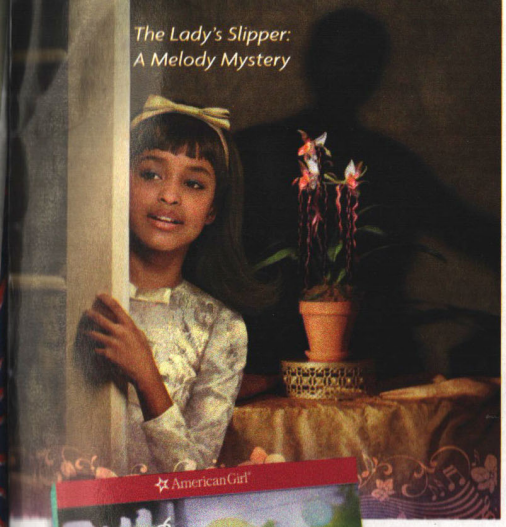
Much like Callie and Martha in the story, my husband and I recently surprised our boys with a last-minute month in London. He had to work there, and we decided to tag along so the family wouldn't be separated.

My boys and I hit all the fun sites that my characters in the story go to like the London Eye, Buckingham Palace, Kyoto Garden, and more! Like the girls in my story, we loved learning the British way of saying things—queue for line, flat for apartment, trainers for sneakers.

I was editing a novel while I was in London so I brought manuscript pages with me wherever we went. I even wrote on the top level of the red double-decker bus as we rode around the city!

Want to be a writer, too? Read books you love. Keep a journal. Write stories for the fun of it and don't worry about whether they're "good" or where they're going to end up. Write because it's fun to write and worry about cleaning it up later.

ILLUSTRATIONS BY MARTA!

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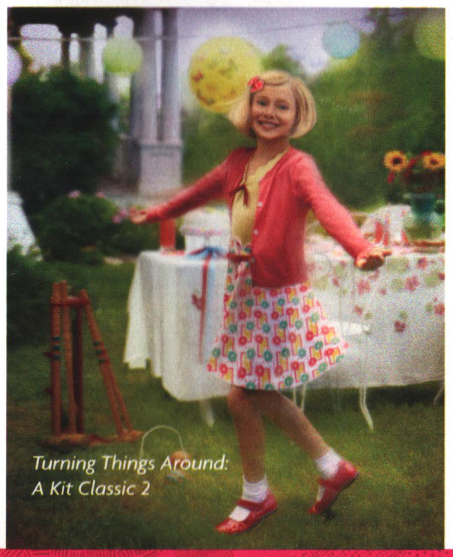


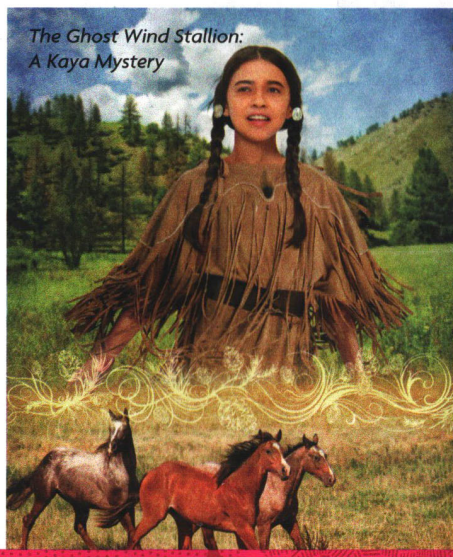


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Coming up in the next issue of **American Girl** magazine!

**Back to School with Aggie**
How will her first day go this year?

**World Class(room)**
Learn about one family's travel/school adventure.

**Spooky 'n' Sweet**
Create a haunted gingerbread house.

**Dream It, Make It**
Give your creativity a chance to shine!

Illustration: Carol Yoshizumi

# SUMMER ADVENTURES

Which world would you explore? Enjoy mini posters from your wildest dreams!

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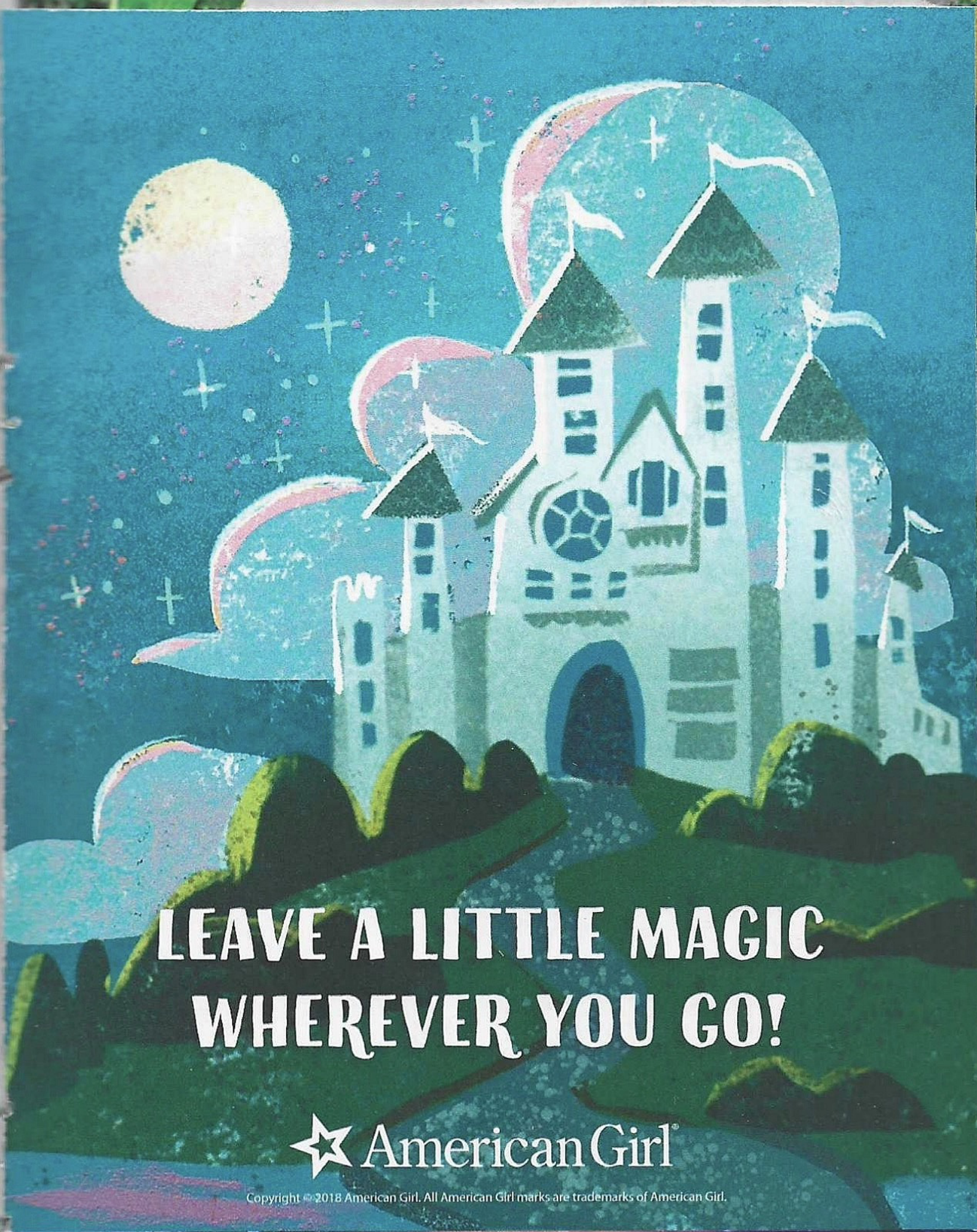
Illustrations: Karly Jade Catto

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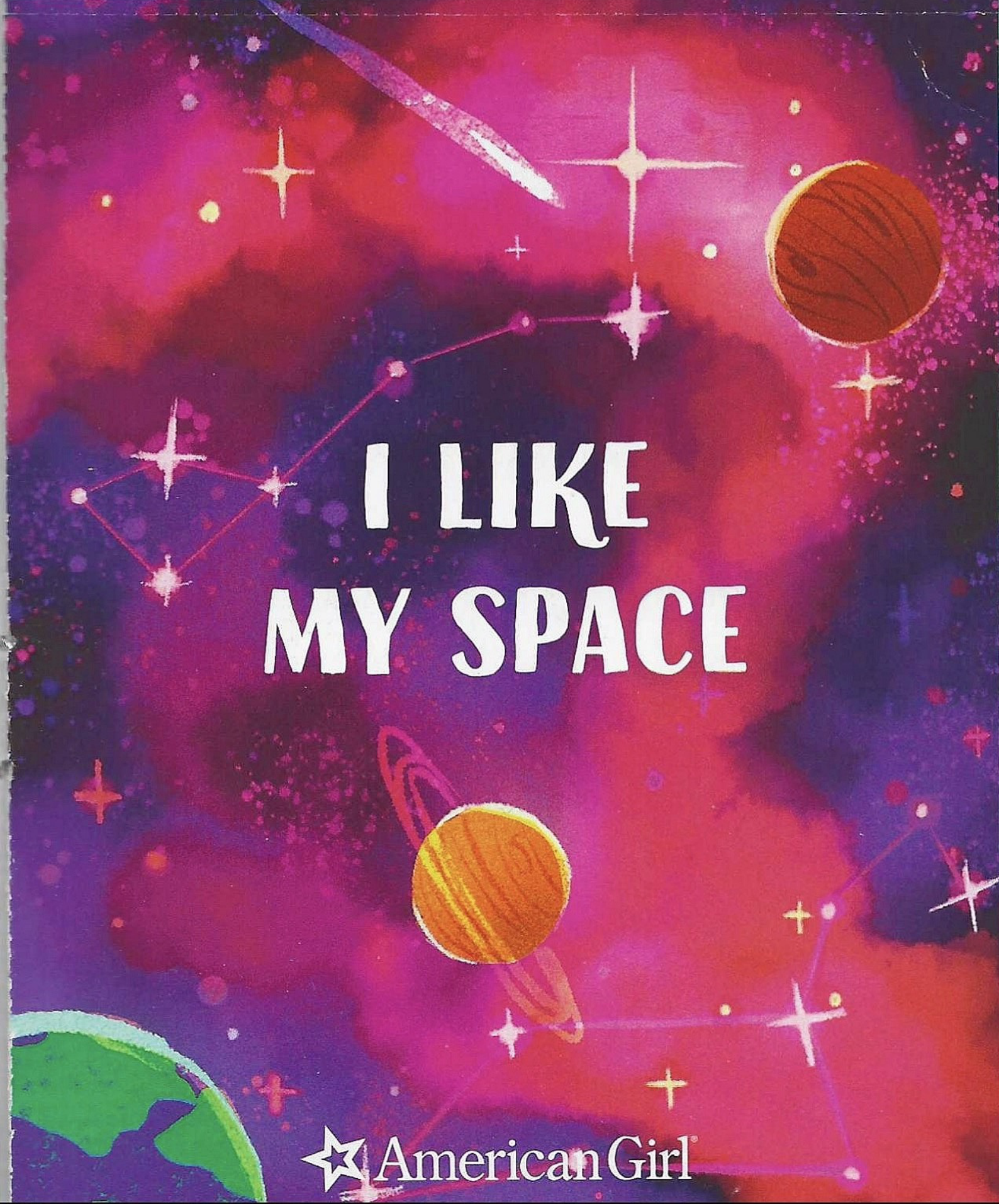
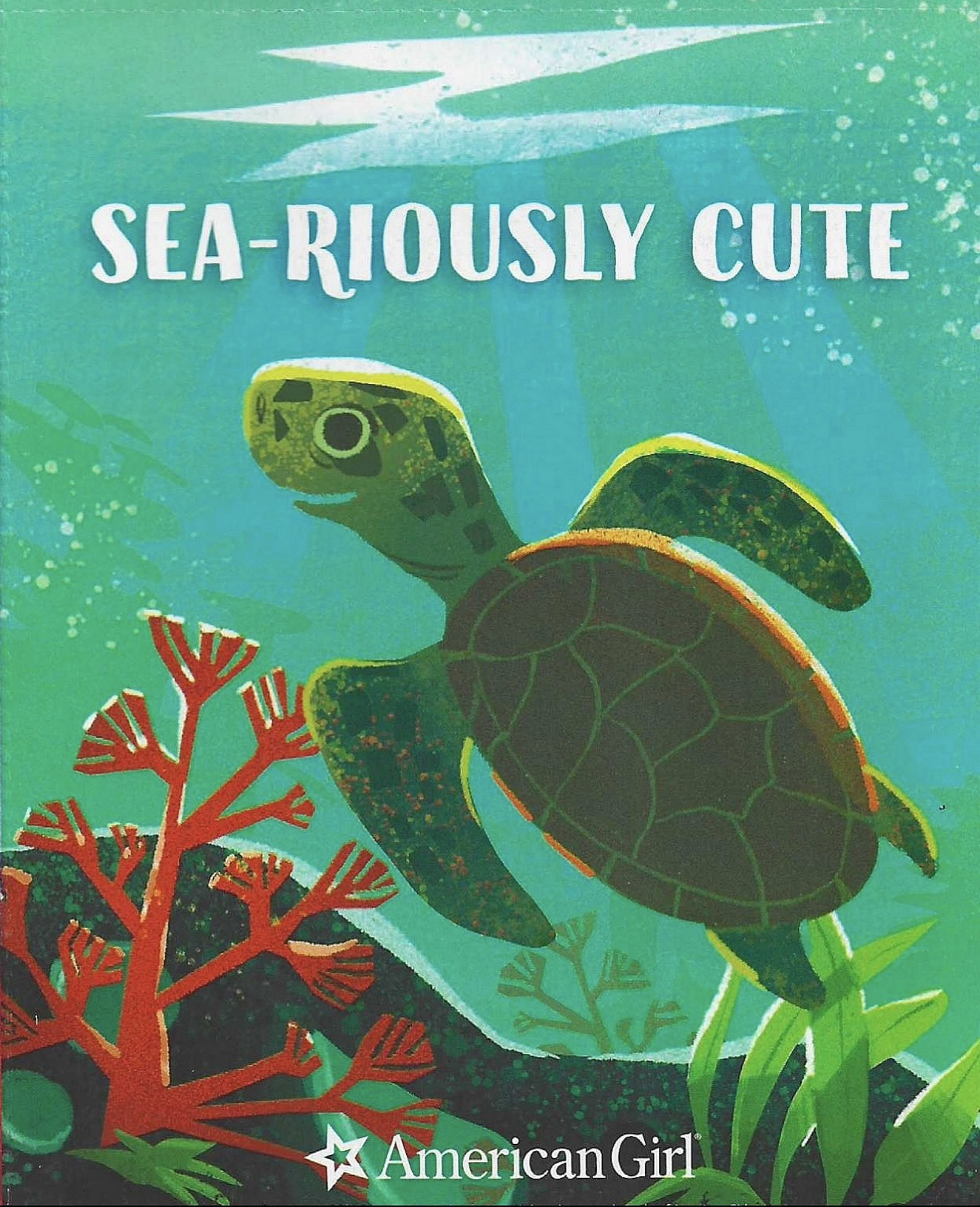

I LIKE
MY SPACE
American Girl

# SEA-RIOUSLY CUTE



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